

July 1, 1999

MR. JOHN TOPOLEWSKI AWARDED
FRANCE'S KNIGHT'S CROSS OF
THE FRENCH LEGION OF HONOR

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 1999

Mr. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great pride to honor a 104 year old veteran in my district. John Topolewski was awarded France's Knight Cross of the French Legion of Honor on Wednesday, June 16, 1999 in Toledo, Ohio. The Knight's Cross is the highest award given by France to citizens of other countries. The award was presented to Mr. Topolewski by France's Consul General Alain de Keghel, the second ranking French official in the U.S., in front of a replica of the troop train which transported U.S. troops to France in World War I. Mr. Topolewski was one of those "Doughboys" and a member of the 82nd Infantry Division. The nation of France has bestowed the Knight's Cross upon John Topolewski for uncommon valor in the trenches as he fought in the United States Army during World War I.

The Greek historian Thucydides wrote "remember that this greatness was won by men with courage, with knowledge of their duty, and with a sense of honor in action . . . but the bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision of what is before them, glory and danger alike, and yet notwithstanding go out to meet it." As a young man at the dawn of his adulthood, John Topolewski embodied these words. He acted because he thought it his duty to his comrades, his country, and the world, not out of a desire for recognition, glory or awards. Consul General Keghel told him as he gave him the medal "More than two million American soldiers were sent across the Atlantic Ocean. The French have not forgot their bravery more than eighty years later. Today it is your turn, Mr. John Topolewski, to be honored. You served in dangerous conditions. You belong for sure among the veterans here."

John Topolewski stands today as a symbol of thousands of nameless heroes of that first great world wide conflict, and the ones which followed. He is a reminder of the humanness in war, of sacrifices made to preserve liberty and regain freedoms withheld. Although I was unable to personally be with him as he received this belated honor, I salute John Topolewski, and thank him on behalf of the people of our nation and freedom lovers world-wide.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL NEED
FOR RECONCILIATION AND
HEALING AND RECOMMENDING A
CALL FOR DAYS OF PRAYER

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 29, 1999

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, last week the House failed to suspend the rules and agree

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

to a resolution that would have recommended that our nation's leaders call for a day of prayer, fasting, and humiliation before God. The Wichita Eagle, a leading Kansas newspaper, asked the Kansas U.S. Representatives to provide a statement explaining their votes on this proposal. I want to take this opportunity to include my response letter in the RECORD.

CATHY WILFONG,
Wichita Eagle.

DEAR MS. WILFONG: On June 29, 1999, I was asked to vote on House Concurrent Resolution 94, a resolution asking that Congress "... call the people they serve to observe, a day of solemn prayer, fasting, and humiliation before God." I voted against the resolution. Here's why:

As a citizen, I value my own religious freedom so very much that I would be insulted if Congress told me how to pray, or how to honor and how to reconcile my relationship with God. In fact, our country was formed by people who came here seeking religious freedom and seeking to escape the tyranny of a king in England who told them how to pray and what kind of religion they would practice. One of the wonderful things about our country is that every person has an opportunity to practice (or not practice) religion exactly as he/she wishes.

For me, religion is an intensely personal thing. I would never presume to tell somebody else how to pray or practice religion. And I would not appreciate anybody doing that to me.

I was struck by the language in the House Resolution which stated that "... it is the necessary duty of the people of this Nation not to only to humbly offer up our prayers and needs to Almighty God, but also in a solemn and public manner to confess our shortcomings ..."

I invite the authors of this resolution to read Matthew 6:5-6. According to my Bible, Jesus said: "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Just maybe our founding fathers had it right. In matters of faith, perhaps it is best that people have the freedom to practice religion as they wish without instruction from their government or from Congress.

Very truly yours,

DENNIS MOORE,
Member of Congress.

RECOGNIZING MR. EDWARD "ED"
RENFROW, STATE CONTROLLER
OF NORTH CAROLINA

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 1999

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of the Congress to State Controller of North Carolina Edward "Ed" Renfrow of Smithfield, NC.

On March 19, 1999, the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP) presented Mr. Renfrow with the distinguished 1998 Donald L. Scantlebury Memorial Award for Distinguished Leadership in Financial Man-

agement Improvement at their 28th Annual Financial Management Conference in Washington, DC. The JFMIP is a cooperative initiative of the General Accounting Office (GAO), the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of the Treasury, and the Office of Personnel Management to improve financial management practices and policies in the public sector.

The Scantlebury awards were named for the former Chief Accountant of the GAO, and were established to give the highest recognition to government executives who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and improvement in financial management in the public sector. The award was presented to Mr. Renfrow by David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the United States.

Governor James B. Hunt of North Carolina nominated Mr. Renfrow for the award stating, "Throughout his distinguished career, Ed Renfrow has served the citizens of North Carolina by providing sustained, high quality leadership in financial management at both the state and national levels. Ed has been a strong voice for fiscal accountability and responsibility within government and has been instrumental in reducing costs and promoting the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of government operations. The awards committee could not have recognized a more accomplished leader in the area of financial management and I congratulate him on this prestigious award."

Mr. Renfrow has distinguished himself through a lengthy career of public service to the people of North Carolina. I am proud to say that I share personal and professional paths with Mr. Renfrow, both of us having grown up in Johnston County and serving together on the North Carolina Council of State from 1989 to 1993. Mr. Renfrow began his career of elective public service in 1974 when he was elected to the North Carolina General Assembly, serving three 2-year Senate terms. In 1980, Mr. Renfrow began his first of three 4-year terms as North Carolina's State Auditor. Mr. Renfrow's current position as North Carolina's State Controller began in 1993 with his appointment by Governor Hunt and subsequent confirmation by the General Assembly. His current term as State Controller ends on June 30, 2001.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in congratulating Edward "Ed" Renfrow on this most recent award, continuing recognition of his long career of public service.

"THAT'S WHAT AMERICA MEANS
TO ME"

HON. DAVID D. PHELPS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 1999

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, I have been fortunate enough to hear from American citizens from all walks of life. I have heard the many voices throughout this nation about what this country means to them. They have expressed their appreciation, love, gratitude and pride for America. I have heard from the veteran who has voiced strong convictions about the value